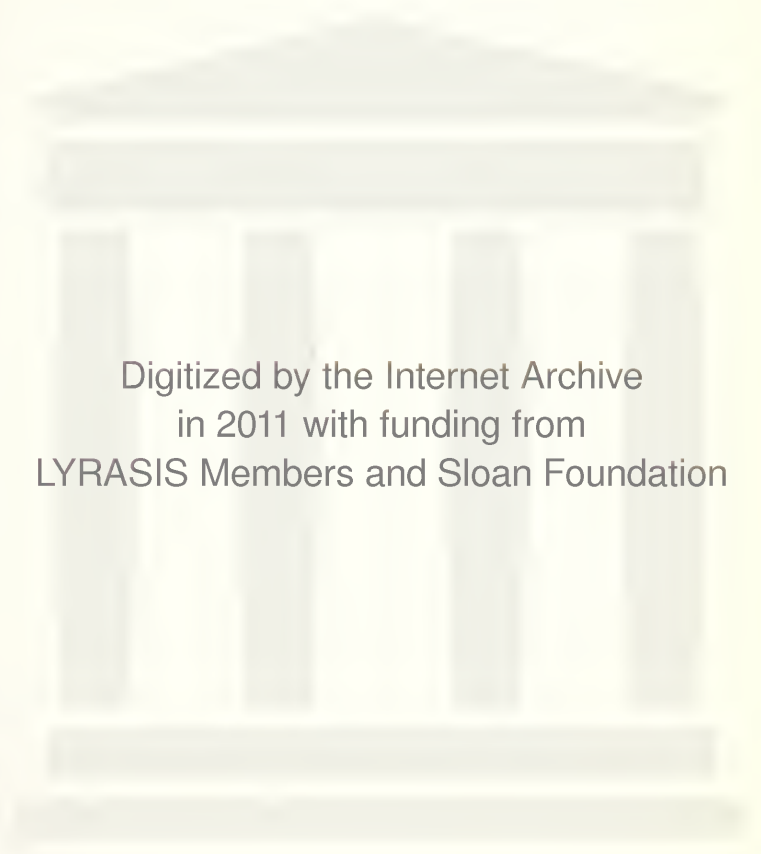




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THE FLYLEAF

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LIBRARY SEMI-CENTENNIAL

The Fondren Library is planning an observance of the Rice Semi-Centennial, to take place on the 19th and 20th of February. Dr. William S. Dix, Librarian of the Institute from 1947 to 1953, and now Librarian of Princeton University, will be the guest of honor, and Miss Alice Dean, Librarian of the Institute from its opening to 1947, will also be present.

A symposium on "University Libraries --Past, Present, and Future" is planned for Tuesday, February 19, and a meeting of the Friends of the Fondren Library to be addressed by Dr. Dix, is planned for Wednesday, February 20. Dr. Dix's subject will be "UNESCO and Education".

Additional notice of these events will be mailed later.

SARAH LANE

After 42 years of service to Rice and its Library, Miss Sarah Louise Lane last fall announced her retirement from the Headship of the Circulation Department. Fortunately, she has agreed to continue to work part time in the Repair Department where one of her library talents can be of the greatest assistance in renovating the collection.

On October 3, the Library staff gave a luncheon honoring Miss Lane at the Cohen House. On that occasion the following remarks were made by the Librarian relative to Miss Lane's retirement:

I can hardly remember a time when I did not know Miss Lane, and look to her for help and counsel. She used to be stationed just off the Sallyport, in a corner of what is now the Registrar's Office. Later she graduated to another small area behind the Circulation Desk of the Fondren. It is an occupational hazard of librarians that they must always work in cramped quarters with little room for their elbows, except in those brief glorious weeks when a new building is opened and a millenium or at least a semi-centennial seems to have arrived.

Many tributes have emphasized many of Miss Lane's best-known characteristics: her spirit of helpfulness, her unselfishness, her unflagging energy either in answering questions or in carrying chairs. For my part I should like to emphasize another of Miss Lane's talents: that of being able to supply in the first instance the second thought which sometimes comes too late. Many an insufficiently-considered plan has been brought

down and made feasible, or perhaps abandoned altogether, because Miss Lane could see the flaws before they had to be discovered the hard way.

For example the happy thought of keeping open until midnight, apparently only 1 extra hour 5 times a week, would actually cause a disproportionate and unjustifiable amount of expense and hardship. Then that supposed panacea for all circulatory ills, a system of fines, is actually full of pitfalls, hard feelings, tedious book-keeping, favoritism for the rich and all sorts of hazards that do not appear to those who would not have to administer the plan.

It is thought by some that the change to a key-sort and punched-card system would improve our circulation efficiency, and such a system may well be instituted. That we have not previously done so, however, is not because Miss Lane was unfamiliar with it. I can well remember two salesmen who paid us a visit to acquaint us with the basic principles of key-sort. I took them to Miss Lane as discoverers of a new process. From somewhere in her well-stocked desk Miss Lane produced a pack of playing cards, notched and punched, and with the help of a skewer perhaps later used for the Thanksgiving turkey she proceeded to pierce the cards and shake out 4 aces, then a royal flush, finally a hand of 13 spades.

On those occasions when her opinion has been overruled, Miss Lane has always accepted the result without further comment and has done her part to make the new plan, whatever it was, a success.

But it would be quite misleading to overemphasize the negative, although all governments need machinery by which hasty decisions can

be avoided or reconsidered. Rather I would wish to emphasize that spirit of helpfulness to which I earlier alluded. Miss Lane has actually had the idea that the library was a place to be used and enjoyed. No one, so far as I am aware, has ever seen Miss Lane express anger or annoyance, although no one has suggested that she has ever been lacking in authority and forcefulness. Certainly I have never known Miss Lane to raise her voice, or hardly an eyebrow, even when a faculty member, who had neglected to make any reservation for the Lecture Lounge, informed her that in 10 minutes he would hold a class of 100 students and required only a blackboard, a lighted lectern, and a movie projector with operator; or even when she confronted a student who had charged out and given away an armful of our books to a high school girl whom he had never seen before and whose name and address he did not know, but whom he described as "a cute little old girl". In all such calamitous cases, Miss Lane's first reaction was to make the best of a bad situation and get on with the remedy rather than the recrimination.

Now Miss Lane has been translated upward, still to a small space, but this time to a room with a view. Not every library has this kind of talent in its mending department--an important department, with an unlimited future--and so it is our hope that Miss Sarah Lane will never really retire.

Hardin Craig, Jr.

FONDREN LIBRARY HOLDINGS IN PHILOSOPHY
AND RELATED FIELDS

Last year, at our Editor's request, I shared with our readers some of my memories of the early beginnings and growth of the Rice Library. Now Professor Norbeck has expressed a more specific interest in the gradual assembling of our collection in the various fields of philosophy, including psychology and religion. I present this brief report in behalf of my colleagues, all of whom have been active in the expansion of our library resources.

When I first came to Rice, in 1914, I shared the experience of a young faculty member in a new university: we were all pioneers on a campus where everything was in its beginnings. How literally true this was in library provisions for philosophy may be judged by a bare statement of fact. I found on the library shelves only two volumes of philosophy: Henry Sidgwick's Outlines of the History of Ethics and Benedetto Croce's Philosophy of the Beautiful. Like other newly-arrived professors, I availed myself without delay of President Lovett's offer to procure the first lot of the books most needed for our immediate work of philosophical instruction. Since then, year after year we have worked to expand the philosophical collection for both teaching and research. While subscribing to the philosophical journals in various lands and languages, we have gradually acquired complete files of almost every one of them of any importance. While purchasing the newly published significant contributions to philosophical literature, we have read carefully second-hand book catalogues for the needed books of bygone years that were out of print. Today our initial collection of two volumes in philosophy

and related studies has increased to more than thirty thousand.

My general comment about our philosophy collection is this: while I had no reason for complaining that I could find only two volumes when I came to Rice, we now have no reason for being content with our thirty thousand. This I regard as a right attitude: no complaints and no contentment. We have grown and we must continue to grow. I recall with appreciation the fact that I have never ordered any volume in philosophy which our Library Staff did not try to procure. I only regret that I did not always persist sufficiently in hunting through second-hand book catalogues or in old book shops where, and where alone, the out-of-print books are to be found.

Time here is a prime factor in one's likely success. The really golden season for a new university library like ours was during the interval between the two world wars, especially in the early twenties. When I was in Germany on a sabbatical leave in the inflation years of 1922 and 1923, I bought books for myself and for our library at one tenth or even less of their probable present cost. But the moral of this last remark is plain: since there is no likelihood that books old or new will be any less expensive in the foreseeable future than they are now, the best plan is to procure them now, as many as we can get.

Our philosophy collection like our entire library, has its oases as well as its arid stretches. Look carefully over the shelves and you can note where special research has been pursued. But again we have had our days of plain good luck. For instance, when the rich collection of modern philosophy gathered by Paul Deussen of the University of Kiel came into the market, we were

able to bid for it early and bought it entire. Again, somewhat later, when work in psychology was being started here, we could begin our collection in that field with the rich library of Professor E. C. Titchener, over four thousand volumes and monographs. One of our very good students, widow of a philosophical bibliophile specializing in French philosophy, presented to us his entire library which included many rare and some irreplaceable early works.

Along with the steady expansion of the library primarily as a workshop for teaching and research, we have been happy to acquire many rare bibliophile treasures. Getting books of that sort is largely a stroke of good fortune. You order ten and you may get one. I still remember the fine day when Miss Alice Dean, our first and truly devoted Librarian, showed me a vellum-bound volume she had just received from Italy: Marsilio Ficino's edition and translation of the Enneads of Plotinus. This is one of the most precious masterpieces of Renaissance scholarship, completed at the Platonic Academy in Florence in the days of the Medicis. At Christmas time one year, when the Southwestern Philosophical Society held its annual meeting in the Fondren Library, we exhibited our rarities, and alongside of Plotinus were first or very early editions of Descartes and Spinoza and Leibniz, Francis Bacon and Hobbes and Locke, Kant and Schopenhauer, and many other leading philosophers. Other departments can hold similar exhibitions, and they would all add to our direct and enjoyable appreciation of the great minds of the past in whose rich heritage of ideas we are privileged to share.

I shall add one last word on a topic which I have been urging these many years. We need at Rice a Special Research Library in which

all our rare books can receive proper care and suitable conditions for their use by our own and visiting scholars. Such a Special Research Library will bring to us many gifts from bibliophiles: "To him that hath it shall be given."

Radoslav A. Tsanoff

THE BARTLETT BEETHOVEN COLLECTION

Dr. H. L. Bartlett, who is well known to the Rice community as the sponsor of the Bartlett Aesthetics Series, has indicated his intention of giving to the Fondren Library his collection of works on Beethoven. This collection, formed over many years and consisting of some 600 volumes, contains many rarities and is considered to be one of the best in the country.

An article in a future issue will be devoted to this collection in general and to its rarities in particular.

WORDS AND MUSIC

The Fondren collection of songs, set up in business by Mr. Ray Wood and often advertised by him, has received two more gifts of sheet music and songs from Mrs. Florence H. Frankenfield and from Mr. C. V. Hess. Almost all piano benches contain material which would enhance the Fondren collection.

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